Writers' Guild

Report Summary

Month's Progress

This month was our opportunity to take stock of things at the guild. While Willow is still doing most of the work, we are recruiting members to help out.

Tidings

The new Tidings is out! We have a cleaner, a reliable printing schedule, and increased circulation. We are working on wider distribution.

What the Guild Needs

Our greatest need is funding for office supplies. We also need the co-operation of the executive & leaders of workshops and rituals to maintain order in our documentation.

Documentation

Our first order of business was to reprint or edit existing documents. We are working with PR Guild on a pamphlet which describes Paganism. Finally, we would like to establish a memory book for CUPS.

CUPS' Journal

While the journal is still out of print, much work is going on behind the scenes. Contributions are being received, and we are designing a completely new, improved quarterly journal.

Month's Progress

We're pretty much back on our feet now! The guild has successfully printed two issues of Tidings, and dug up some publicity documents for Frater Oz to use on information tables. We're currently working at producing new documentation, particularly posters to announce upcoming CUPS events.

While Willow is still doing most of the work, she is busy recruiting folks to take over a portion of her duties. Heather Goodwin has graciously agreed to help out. Hertha Fellner von Feldigg is also busy supplying us with useful documents.

Tidings

The new *Tidings* is out! Since taking over the Writers' Guild, Willow has published two issues: one for February and one for March. The new format seems very popular, and several folks have commented that it looks professional.

New features include a list of important dates, such as new & full moons, sabbats and eclipses, that members can use as a reference. A column which gives basic information about one topic relevant to the season has been introduced. The March column discusses spring equinox. April's column will discuss the solar & lunar cycles as they relate to Paganism. We hope to go to a four-page format in the fall, so that we can include other similar items on a monthly basis.

In February, a new printing schedule was established in response to our members' confusion about the availability of *Tidings*. The March issue was printed on schedule, however we did encounter difficulties getting information about the month's events on time. Upcoming print deadlines are March 21st and

April 18th. We hope they will be respected!

Also in response to feedback from members, we have increased the number of copies printed. The initial fifty copies made during the last week of February were pretty much gone the following week. Another thirty copies were made for the PR Guild's information table. They took care of dropping copies off at CSU and the Mélange Magique. They have also promised to find other stores willing to carry *Tidings* for us, beginning this month with Paradigme Books. We hope that a wider distribution basis will be more convenient for current members, and that it will also help us to reach out to potential members, as well.

Another way we can increase availability and convenience for our members is to highlight the option of subscription to *Tidings*. Willow announced this possibility at the March general meeting. It was also printed in the March *Tidings*, and will be highlighted in April's issue.

What the Guild Needs

What we need most right now is funding. The Guild deals with a number of documents which must be saved to computer diskette, printed, and photocopied for distribution. The result is a need for office supplies, and for a large printing budget. In the way of office supplies, we require an ample supply of paper and ink cartridge for printing. At the present time, twenty 3-1/2" disks should suffice; however we will begin to need more in the future.

As for printing, we need to know exactly how much money has been allocated for printing, and how the print budget is being managed. Since the copy centres in the university do not charge tax, the price for printing there is lower than at other businesses. We are also impressed with the quality and range of services offered by the university. We would prefer to make our copies at Concordia; agreements made by the CSU with other copy centres may prevent this, however. We would like to be informed on this matter, and we would also appreciate the executive communicating the reasons for our preference to the new CSU representatives: perhaps our feedback will have some effect on their decision making process!

Of lesser consequence, but still important to our ability to keep order in the documents, is the establishment of a filing system at CUPS. The guild has a number of educational documents, as well as originals of publicity information, back issues of *Tidings*, etc. which need safe storage. One drawer in a filing cabinet would be ideal; perhaps this could be arranged for the new office location. In the meantime, if we could clean out the desk in the office & purchase some file folders, most of our documents could be kept at the office.

Documentation

The guild is slowly working on our collection of documentation. A reprint of the mandate Willow composed last year was provided to the PR Guild for their Women's Day information table. The two guilds are currently working on designing a pamphlet which will define Paganism and some of its terminology. There has been a demand for such a document for some time, now, and we feel it should be given priority. The Writers' Guild has also combined the proposal sheets for both workshop & ritual leaders, and simplified the form for easier use.

A number of documents were copied from computer files and brought to the office or left at information tables. So far as can be determined, these documents have disappeared from sight. They were intended for display in the office and at information tables and meetings. If anyone knows where they are, please return them to the office! The documents include commentaries on Imbolc, and an essay on the Chinese New Year.

The CUPS memory book kept in the office has been admired and displayed on many information tables in past. Unfortunately, it is sadly out of date and gives the impression CUPS is no longer an active group. To the contrary, we are more active than we have been in the past, but we are failing to keep records of our events. In order to rectify this situation, the guild would like to begin compiling a new memory book, which would include publicity posters & registration

sheets for activities, minutes of executive & general meetings, *Tidings*, correspondence, etc. The materials would be inserted into clear document covers and gathered in a large binder to be kept in the office. The binder could then be transported to meetings, displayed at information tables, or simply consulted during office hours. At the end of the semester, an attractive cover could be designed and the documents could be taken to the copy centre for binding.

We already have available a suitable binder. All we need to do is purchase a supply of document covers and begin collecting our documentation!

The guild has already created a new proposal sheet for members who would like to lead a workshop or ritual. Once properly completed, this form gives us all the information we need for publicity documents, and an outline of the planned event. We also supply publicity posters for all events, and registration sheets for workshops. We ask only that the executive & event leaders make use of these documents and return them safely to the binder. This will not only help us to keep complete records, but it will simplify the registration process for those workshops requiring it.

CUPS' Journal

Spiral Quest has not been printed in about a year now. At the time the decision was made to postpone printing, it was felt that it was better to wait until we could assemble a journal with more quality, on a reliable schedule. Writers' Guild supports this decision 100%, and we are currently working on assembling an improved journal with a permanent staff. We hope to begin publication by the fall.

Changes to the journal will be quite radical. To begin with, a new printing schedule will be established: rather than printing two or three issues when time & materials permit, we will publish a quarterly journal, to be distributed around the solstices & equinoxes. Eventually, we would like to publish an additional four issues at the Greater Sabbats, but we feel this would be too ambitious a goal right now.

Next, we would like to change the focus of the journal, and thereby its contents. Since Tidings is an internal newsletter, of interest mostly to current & potential members, we would like the journal to cater to a broader population. Of course, our members will be included, but we would also like to speak to Montrealers who do not attend our events, and to folks outside of Montreal, as well. Consequently, the type of material we publish will have a broader range. We would also like to focus more on educational or information-based articles, with a smaller proportion of creative writing. It is important for Pagans to have affordable access to quality information; it is also part of CUPS' mandate to reach out to others and help them learn about Paganism. Our new journal will be chock-full of articles which inform, discuss, analyze, and teach, all backed up by verifiable references and a high level of scholarship. All this means that we will be printing some shorter items as before, but there will also be one or more articles that span at least two or three pages - something which is becoming more & more uncommon in Pagan publications!

We are already receiving unsolicited contributions for the new journal. These are being read & edited for print, and a new editorial policy is being written to serve as a guide for members who would like to submit articles. Regular columns for the journal are being discussed; some ideas we are working on include: columns on human sexuality and herbs; book, music & computing reviews; current events & Pagan news from non-Pagan media; etc.

The new journal will of course have a new face, including a new name and logo. We have chosen a working title and Brandwinn of Wytchkraft Arts & Graphics is at work designing a new logo for us. All will be revealed with the first issue!